Liberia — 1912

A Quadrennium of Success in Africa

By Bishop Hartzell

During the past four years, our Missionary work in Africa has gone forward with many encouraging results. Our great fields are in the midst of the more than one hundred million native black Africans, and among the Mohammedans in North Africa. At Madeira Islands, we are making steady progress among the Portuguese Roman Catholics, and in several centers we have Churches among European and African white people, but as I have just said, our stragetic and great centers, both as to territory and future development, are among the barbaric black and Moslem multitudes.

Our greatest embarrassment is the fewness of the Missionaries as compared with their responsibiltties. No more pathetic condition can be found among the Christian workers of the world than as a rule prevails in Africa at least, among our noble men and women, who by force of circumstances are called upon to do much more than they ought. Some are actually carrying the work which ought to be divided between three or four, but there is never a murmur. With faith in God and in humanity, and with patient and consecrated effort they stand in their places, waiting and praying for the reenforcements which ought to come. Among the black races our work would be classed as evangelical, medical and industrial. In the first, instruction in religious life begins with the youngest in the mission homes or Sunday school and day schools, as well as in the public congregations. The growth in actual membership has been remarkable. Instead of about 3500 members a few years ago, we now have among these people, nearly 12,000 actually enrolled and professing conversion. Beyond these are multitudes who are adherents or are being influenced by the teaching and preaching of the Gospel. In fact, this whole mass of barbaric heathenism—the largest of its type anywhere on earth, is being rapidly an profoundly stirred under the direct and indirect influences of Christian missions. As yet the masses as a whole, occupying the great heart of the Continent has not been touched with direct Christian work, and perhaps more than half of them have as yet not heard the name of Christ. We are doing the best we can in our primary and advanced schools to prepare men and women for active service among their people. Our equipment for this work is wholly inadequate, and still the results are very encouraging. We have over 500 native pastors and teachers, including their wives, in charge of out-stations. These are grouped in circuits, which in turn are in charge of missionaries. Whenever possible, we are securing lands. In Rhodesia alone, we have about 30,000 acres to which we have titles from the Government, not counting the plots of ground which the out-stations have, where work is going forward in the kraals or towns among the natives. These centers are scattered far and near, each having from one to five thousand acres. On each, the plan is to locate two or more missionaries who will build their homes, Churches and school-houses, secure the location of native families, and have gardens and other agricultural work, all being done by the natives under direction. Our largest and central station of this type is at Old Umtali. Here is our training school for Christian workers, which numbers about 100, half of each day being given by the students to different types of industry, such as agriculture and mecahanics. Here, the Woman's Foreign Missioary Society has a Training School for girls, enrolling about 75. In many respects, the equipment is inadequate, but the policy is to do such teaching as will qualify the natives to go among their people and be of service to them not only religiously, but industrially in their present status.

We are very deficient in medical missionaries. but it is surprising how much dispensary work is being done through the work of the missionaries at the various stations, who dispense simple remedies and give treatment to men, women and children where the cases are not serious.

Under education, we class our printing establishments. We have four of these. In Liberia and Angola on the West Coast, and at Inhambane and Old Umtali on the East and South Central Africa. We are also putting in a paper at Madeira Islands, and a Publishing Committee in North Africa which has begun the issuing of hymns, tracts, etc., in the Arabic and Kabyle languages, for use among the Moslems.

Our Committee co-operates with the British Foreign Bible Society in publishing the Scriptures. We are printing over ten millions of pages this year, and this issue will double in the near future. Nearly all this is divided among seven native languages on the East Coast, and in Rhodesia. About 130 of the more than 600 native languages have been reduced to writing. Many of these are capable of expressing as fine shades of them as the English language. A native black African is a linguist by nature. I have ofter met men among them who, by a few years of intercourse with Europeans on the Coast, will master the languages of the ruling country, and where populations are mixed, I have heard them use two, and occasionally three. We have issued the whole Bible in one language, the New Testament in three different tongues, and are issuing portions of the New Testament in others.

We have in our schools about 3,000, and still larger numbers in our Sunday schools. Wherever possible, the plan is to have the boys and girls work in the gardens or at some form of other practical industry a half of each day in our central schools in East Africa and Rhodesia. In all this work we begin using the simplest methods, and as the number of workers and our equipment make it possible, progress. The largest single development is at Old Umtali. If we could have $100,000 in the next couple of years from this center, we could develop an educational and industrial work that would tell marvelously. We have the co-operation of the British Government in Southern Rhodesia, which adds greatly both in supervision of the educational work under Government inspectors in cooperation with our missionaries, and also in making some money grants in proportion to the grade of the school.

Perhaps the most notable phase of our work in Africa has been th phenomenal development in North Africa. A few weeks since I held the third annual session of the Mission at Tunis, a city of 240,000 people, within the bounds of the old diocese of Cyprian, and only a few miles from where he went to martyrdom. I appointed 31 regular workers who are members of the Mission under whom there will be quite a number of additional helpers. Our work is established also in Constantine, Algeria, Oran and in the Kabylian mountains in the interior from Algiers. The combined population of these four cities is over half a million, and of Tunitia and of Algieria, where they are located, the population numbers fully fifteen million.

On the west is the Empire of Morocco, passing under French rule, where a call for Christian missions comes with tremendous

insistency, backed by many providential indications of duty and responsibility. East of Tunitia lies Tripoli and Cyrenaica; soon every Christian intelligent upon the subject hopes to be under the Italian flag. Here, too, the call of God to the Christian Church to enter this field so long blighted and cursed by the rule of the Moslem, is imperative. We had eleven converts among the Moslems the past year. We have our training schools in two centers for Moslem boys and Kabyle young men preparing them for work among their people. We have over 400 women and girls under our care, chiefly the work of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society. We have two well organized French churches in Algiers and Constantine. Nearly all of our workers are the masters of two languages—some of three and some of four. Our Arabic scholar has aided in completing the Gospel of Luke in that language, and has ready part of another book. He is putting the stories of the Bible into simple rhyme in the Arabic and setting the boys and girls to singing them. At Constantine I preached to a congregation that filled our hall. Among the people were several Moslem women unveiled, who attended with the consent of their husbands and families. There were also French and English, as well as our missionaries. No such congregation as this has assembled in that section of North Africa for twelve centuries, since the sword of Mohammedanism wiped out the Christian Church.

Will American Methodism meet its obligations before God in carrying forward this marvelously Providential beginning in the Moslem world, which, by common consent, is known to be the chief missionary problem of the twentieth century.

June 7, 1912.

THE FUTURE OF LIBERIA.

Below we quote the substance of a dispatch relating to the organization of finances in the Republic of Liberia. This is the outcome of the work of the American Commission to Liberia several years ago, the members of which Commission were Dr. Roland P. Falkner, Dr. George Sale, and Mr. Emmett J. Scott. 11-28-12-age

WASHINGTON, D. C., Friday, Nov. 22.—Official advices have been received by the State Department as to the terms of the refunding of the debt of the little Negro Republic of Liberia, on the west coast of Africa. The 1912 loan for the rehabilitation of the finances of the Republic is the outcome of the interest which the American Government has taken in the affairs of Liberia during the last few years.

Following the issuance of the bonds the arrangement for the international control of the customs revenues of Liberia will be under the supervision of Reed Paig Clark, an American who was appointed to the post on the recommendation of President Taft. Mr. Clark will be assisted by three other receivers, to be apointed by Germany, Great Britain and France, respectively.

From the point of view this dispatch gives some encouraging facts as to the future of Liberia, from another point of view it places Liberia in a serious and, we fear, handicapped position. In a word, to put it bluntly and plainly, Liberian finance in the future will be in the hands of four white men, one from the United States, one from Germany, one from England and one from France, and we need not add that the man who controls the finances of a country controls in a large measure that country. We hope that Liberia, however, may be able to extricate itself and before the passing of many years place itself upon an independent financial basis where it will be able to manage and control its own affairs unhampered and unhindered by foreigners. But nevertheless, Liberia must face the serious fact that it seldom occurs in any part of the world where a white man once gets control that he lets up on that control.

The fundamental difficulty of Liberia consists in the fact that the people have failed to develop the natural resources of the country. The riches of the land, of forest, of mines, of rivers and harbors have lain almost dormant. The result is that instead of Liberia being a great exporting country, it has imported at great cost the necessities of life. Almost the only available cash in the Republic is the money sent by outsiders for missionary and religious purposes.

Instead of educating the young people to become farmers, skilled tradesmen and mining engineers, in many cases the education has been a mere veneering or imitation of superficial education given in France or England. Unless Liberia turns around and begins to educate the people in the head and hand so that they will develop themselves the natural resources of the country, the entire control of the Republic will pass from our people.

The amount of money involved in this loan is scarcely sufficient to defray the present indebtedness, and when the four white commissioners get their share of the revenue receipts, there will not be much left for the development of the Republic unless Liberia through the development of its natural resources increases the exports and decreases the imports. It is perfectly foolhardy and shortsighted for the people of the country to import canned goods from England and Germany when these same products can be gotten from the soil of the country.

Liberia should make a reform in another direction. Instead of treating the natives in the interior as inferiors, instead of lording it over these natives and trying to make them servants, the Liberians should in a hearty, sympathetic manner identify themselves with the life of those natives and make them a real part of the Republic in reality as well as in name.

LIBERIA'S NEW PRESIDENT

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President Howard Inaugurated President of Republic, Succeeding Arthur Barclay—New Executive Optimistic.

Dispatches from Monrovia, Liberia, state that President Daniel Howard was inaugurated Monday as Chief Executive of the Republic of Liberia, succeeding Arthur Barclay, who for eight years had occupied the Presidential office.

The ceremony was marked by much dignity. A procession, headed by the members of the Legislature, led by the speakers of the Senate and the House of Representatives, escorted President Howard to the Chamber of Representatives. Here the new President, after taking the oath, read his inaugural address, in which he set forth his ideas on reform and announced several schemes for the development of the country.

He made special reference to the present political situation of Liberia and to its relations with the great powers, and said that the uncertainty of the past had given way to the positive assurance that Liberia's integrity would remain intact.

The President expressed satisfaction that the protracted negotiations in connection with the finances of the country had been brought to a conclusion owing to the sympathetic interest displayed by the United States, Great Britain and the other prominent powers. All outstanding difficulties with regard to the boundaries of the country had been settled satisfactorily, and Liberia now looked forward to a period of prosperity.

age LIBERIAN DEBT 11-22-12

Washington, D. C., Nov. 20.—The State Department has been advised of the completion of arrangements for the issue of bonds for the rehabilitation of the finances of Liberia and for the international control of Liberia customs revenues under the general supervision of Reed Paige Clark of the United States. Mr. Clark was appointed to the position on the recommendation of President Taft, and will be assisted by three men from Germany, France and England respectively.